

Message Text

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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 6563

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT KS

SUBJECT: ROKG CASE AGAINST REV. PARK HYUNG KYU

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. I DISCUSSED THE RECENT CONVICTION OF REV. PARK HYUNG KYU WITH KIM CHONG YOM, SECRETARY GENERAL TO THE PRESIDENT. I REMINDED HIM THAT SECRETARY ROGERS HAD MENTIONED THIS MATTER TO THE PRESIDENT AND THAT I HAD LATER SPOKEN TO KIM OF THE REACTIONS TO THE CASE WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN KOREA AND BROAD. I UNDERSTOOD THE SENTENCE MIGHT BE APPEALED AND I WONDERED WHAT MR. KIM COULD TELL ME ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE ON THE MATTER. I POINTED OUT THAT WE CONTINUED TO RECEIVE REGULAR INQUIRIES FROM INTERESTED CHURCHMEN IN THE US AND THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY HERE, BOTH FOREIGN AND KOREAN, WAS GREATLY EXERCISED BY THE WHOLE AFFAIR.

2. KIM SAID THE MATTER HAD BEEN PURSUED THROUGH THE COURTS AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE THROUGH THE APPEAL. I SAID I HAD HEARD THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONSIDERING PAROLE OR SUSPENSION OF SENTENCE. IF THIS WAS TRUE, I SAID, IT WOULD MAKE A GREAT DEAL OF DIFFERENCE IN MITIGATING ADVERSE REACTION. KIM POINTED OUT THAT REV. PARK HAD ADMITTED TO DISTRIBUTION CONFIDENTIAL

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OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT PAMPHLETS IN VIOLATION OF THE LAW. I POINTED OUT THAT THE PROSECUTION'S CASE WAS ALSO BASED UPON CONSPIRACY, INCLUDING ASSOCIATION WITH THE YUN PIL YOUNG AFFAIR, WHICH WAS NOT GENERALLY ACCEPTED AS A FACTOR

IN THE CASE.

3. I SAID I HAD BROUGHT THE MATTER UP TO CALL
TO HIS ATTENTION THE INTERNATIONAL PERPERCUSSIONS OF THE
CASE IN THE US AND ELSEWHERE. I SAID IT WAS
COMING AT A TIME WHEN THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE
ATTENTION BEING PAID TO KOREA OVER THE KIM TAE CHUNG AFFAIR
AND THE TWO MATTERS WERE BEING COUPLED TOGETHER AS EXAMPLES
OF KOREAN REPRESSION OF DISSENT. THIS WAS NOT
HELPFUL TO THE KOREAN IMAGE GENERALLY BUT ALSO IT CAME
AT A TIME WHEN WE WERE PREPARING FOR A CRUCIAL DEBATE IN
THE UNITED NATIONS AND IT WAS IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST
TO MINIMIZE UNFAVORABLE REACTIONS.

4. KIM SAID HE APPRECIATED MY CALLING THIS TO HIS
ATTENTION IN THAT CONTEXT AND HE WOULD DISCUSS THE
MATTER WITH PRESIDENT PARK.

5. COMMENT: WE ARE GETTING SIGNALS FROM A NUMBER OF
DIRECTIONS THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF THE DESIRABILITY
OF FREEING REV. PARK IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. I FELT
IT DESIRABLE TO GIVE IT A PUSH IN THAT DIRECTION THROUGH
THIS MEDIUM. I BELEIVE KIM WILL MAKE MY CONCERNS KNOWN
IN THE RIGHT PLACE, BUT I AM NOT ABLE TO PREDICT WHAT
THE OUTCOME WILL BE. I HAVE ALSO PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED
THE CASE WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE MINISTER OF
JUSTICE AND I THINK THEY UNDERSTAND THE MATTER IS NOT
PURELY LOCAL IN NATURE.
HABIB

CONFIDENTIAL

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